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EUR/WE /P/SP; D/C (MCCOO); EUR/PA; INR/P; INR/EUC; PM; OSC ISA
FOR ILN; NEA; WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC/WEUROPE; DOC FOR ITA/EUR/FR
AND PASS USTR/PA; USINCEUR FOR PAO; NATO/PA; MOSCOW/PA;
ROME/PA; USVIENNA FOR USDEL OSCE.

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - SECRETARY RICE TO MOSCOW
EU-AMERICAN RELATIONS: THE CASE OF ROMANIA
PARIS - THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

- [1](#). SECRETARY RICE TO MOSCOW
- [2](#). EU-AMERICAN RELATIONS: THE CASE OF ROMANIA

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE POINT DEVOTES A SHORT COLUMN, TITLED "A
COUSIN FROM AMERICA," TO CRAIG STAPLETON, PRESIDENT BUSH'S
CHOICE FOR AMBASSADOR TO PARIS. HELENE VISSIERE WRITES: "IF HE
IS CONFIRMED, STAPLETON WILL HAVE THE DIFFICULT TASK OF
APPEASING FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN RATHER
STORMY SINCE THE WAR IN IRAQ. HIS STYLE WILL NOT NECESSARILY
HELP HIM. BEFORE LEAVING PRAGUE HE WAS ASKED WHAT ADVICE HE
HAD FOR HIS SUCCESSOR: 'DO NOT TAKE KID GLOVES. AMERICAN
AMBASSADORS DO THINGS THAT WOULD NEVER OCCUR TO CAREER
DIPLOMATS.'"

A WIDE VARIETY OF STORIES ARE FEATURED ON TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.
THE NEW POPE CONTINUES TO ELICIT INTEREST AND COMMENTARIES,
WITH RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO DEVOTING FIVE PAGES AND ITS
EDITORIAL, TITLED, "BENEDICT THE EUROPEAN" TO HIS DOCTRINE AND
WORLD REACTION TO HIS ELECTION.

THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION AND FRANCE'S REFERENDUM ARE ALSO A
LEAD STORY, WITH POPULAR RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE PARISIEN
HEADLINING: "YES, THE 'YES' CAN STILL WIN." THE STORY IS
LINKED TO A POLL CONDUCTED ON BEHALF OF THE PAPER BY THE CSA
POLLING INSTITUTE AFTER PRESIDENT CHIRAC'S CONTROVERSIAL
TELEVISED SHOW. IT INDICATES THAT ALTHOUGH THE 'NO' IS STILL
IN THE LEAD WITH 52 PERCENT, IT HAS LOST 4 PERCENTAGE POINTS,
AND THE 'YES,' GAINING 4 PERCENTAGE POINTS, IS UP TO 48
PERCENT.

SEVERAL COMMENTARIES ARE DEVOTED TO PRESIDENT CHIRAC'S ROLE IN
TRIGGERING THIS NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE REFERENDUM. IN LE
POINT, COLUMNIST NICOLAS BAVAREZ WRITES: "THE FEAR OF CHANGE
EXPRESSED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE (PARTICIPATING IN THE TELEVISED
SHOW) IS A DIRECT PRODUCT OF CHIRAC'S DEMAGOGUERY. HE HAS
TRAPPED HIMSELF; IN DENOUNCING THE CHIMERA OF AN 'ULTRA-
LIBERAL, ANGLO-SAXON AND ATLANTICIST EUROPE' HE HAS FED THE
CAMPAIGN FOR THE 'NO.' THE TRUTH IS THAT THERE IS A MAJORITY
EXPRESSING ITSELF AGAINST CHIRAC, AND EUROPE HAS BECOME AN
UNFORTUNATE COLLATERAL DAMAGE."

SECRETARY RICE'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IS REPORTED, ALBEIT NOT

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EXTENSIVELY. HER CRITICISM OF PUTIN IS NOTED IN LIBERATION,
WHILE POPULAR RIGHT-OF-CENTER FRANCE SOIR REPORTS ON THE
"KREMLIN'S FEAR OF TOO MANY REBELLIONS AT ITS DOOR." (SEE PART
C)

IRAQ AND THE DISCOVERY OF 57 BODIES ARE WIDELY REPORTED. LEFT-
OF-CENTER LIBERATION SUGGESTS THIS COULD REOPEN THE
CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE UNCONFIRMED SHIITE HOSTAGES IN MADAEN.

SEVERAL OUTLETS REPORT MOUSSAOUI'S DECISION TO PLEAD GUILTY IN
CONNECTION WITH HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE 9/11 ATTACKS. IN
POPULAR RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE PARISIEN THOMAS CANTALOUBE ASKS:
"IS MOUSSAOUI SANE? BY ACCEPTING HIS REQUEST, JUDGE BRINKEMA
APPEARS TO HAVE DECIDED THAT HE UNDERSTANDS HIS RIGHTS AND THE
RISKS HE IS TAKING, TWO NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO BE ABLE TO
PLEAD GUILTY. BUT OTHERS SUGGEST THAT MOUSSAOUI HAS ALREADY
PROVEN TO BE UNSTABLE., 'A CONDITION THAT MAY HAVE BEEN MADE
WORSE BECAUSE OF HIS ISOLATION,' SAYS LAW PROFESSOR ROGER
WILLIAMS."

RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO DEVOTES A REPORT TO AN ALLEGED
CONTROVERSY BETWEEN PARIS AND BUCHAREST AND THE ROLE
WASHINGTON IS PLAYING WITH EUROPE'S NEW MEMBERS. (SEE PART C)

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

SECRETARY RICE TO MOSCOW

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"A SPREAD OF REVOLUTIONS ON RUSSIA'S DOORSTEP."
THOMAS DE ROCHECHOUART IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER FRANCE SOIR (04/21):
"ON A VISIT TO MOSCOW, CONDOLEEZZA RICE DID NOT SPARE PUTIN,
WHEN SHE SAID THAT 'AMERICA WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE RUSSIAN
PRESS'S LACK OF INDEPENDENCE.' ALTHOUGH SHE CAME OFFICIALLY TO
'RE-ENFORCE THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH RUSSIA,'
CONDOLEEZZA RICE, WHO IS ALTERNATIVELY CALLED THE 'BLACK
PANTHER' OR THE 'STEEL MAGNOLIA,' HAS PROVEN ONCE AGAIN TO
WHAT EXTENT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KREMLIN AND THE WHITE HOUSE
ARE DETERIORATING. MOSCOW IS HOLDING WASHINGTON RESPONSIBLE
FOR RECENT 'DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS' AT ITS DOORSTEP. AND IS
AFRAID THAT IT IS THE TARGET OF A PROCESS AIMING TO TOPPLE
PUTIN'S REGIME AND REPLACE IT WITH ONE THAT WOULD BE MORE
FAVORABLE TO WASHINGTON. THE RUSSIANS FEAR A SPREAD OF
DEMOCRACY AT HOME ON THE HEELS OF REVOLUTIONS SUCH AS THE ONE
IN KIRGHIZSTAN."

"WASHINGTON WATCHING OVER PUTIN"
LORRAINE MILLOT IN LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION (04/21):
"SECRETARY OF STATE RICE DID NOT WEAR KID GLOVES WHEN SHE MADE
ACERBIC REMARKS ON THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA.
WASHINGTON WILL BE WATCHING CLOSELY TO INSURE THAT PUTIN
LEAVES THE KREMLIN IN 2008, AS DEFINED BY THE CONSTITUTION."

EU-AMERICAN RELATIONS: THE CASE OF ROMANIA

"THE U.S. HAMPERS RELATIONS BETWEEN BUCHAREST AND PARIS"
ARIELLE THEDREL IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (04/21): "ON
MONDAY ROMANIA WILL SIGN ITS EU MEMBERSHIP TREATY. THE NEW
ROMANIAN PRESIDENT, WHO IS QUITE UPFRONT ABOUT HIS ATTRACTION
TO THE U.S., HAS ELICITED SOME ANNOYANCE FROM OTHER EU MEMBERS
WITH HIS MENTION OF A 'BUCHAREST-LONDON-WASHINGTON AXIS.'
AFTER HAVING HELPED BUCHAREST IN ITS EFFORTS TO JOIN THE EU,
FRANCE IS NOT HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN LEFT OUT IN THE COLD. FM
BARNIER HAS ALREADY SAID THAT BASESCU DOES NOT PROVE TO HAVE A
'EUROPEAN REFLEX' AND THAT HE CONFUSES 'ALLIANCE' WITH
'ALLEGIANCE' TO THE AMERICANS. THE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT HAS
RESPONDED BY SAYING IN RECENT INTERVIEWS THAT HE 'DOES NOT
APPRECIATE RECEIVING SUCH LESSONS.' ON HIS VISIT TO PARIS ON
TUESDAY THE ROMANIAN EU MINISTER WAS ASKED BY HIS FRENCH
COUNTERPART TO DENY SUCH COMMENTS, WHICH HE IMMEDIATELY DID.
WHAT LIES BEHIND THIS QUARREL? THE TRUTH IS THAT THE ROMANIAN
PRESIDENT WANTS HIS COUNTRY TO BECOME A REGIONAL POWER AND IS
COUNTING ON THE AMERICANS FOR THIS. THE COMPLEX GAME BETWEEN
THE U.S. AND RUSSIA IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ROMANIA. AS A NATO
MEMBER, IT IS READY TO WELCOME U.S. BASES. AND HAS OFFERED TO
EXPAND NATO'S 'ACTIVE ENDEAVOR' OPERATION TO THE BLACK SEA,
WHICH FRANCE AND TURKEY OPPOSE. THE GUAM SUMMIT COULD HELP
THAT DORMANT ORGANIZATION TO COME BACK TO LIFE THANKS TO THE
AMERICANS, WHO, TO COUNTER RUSSIA'S INFLUENCE, WANT TO TURN
THE GUAM INTO A SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION ORGANIZATION
FAVORABLE TO THE WEST. ROMANIA, AN OBSERVER AT THE SUMMIT,
COULD FIND A ROLE TO FIT ITS AMBITIONS." WOLFF